

## Just for Laughs Chicago: Martin Short on His Own Character

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CHICAGO – Martin Short, the classic comic performer of SCTV, Saturday Night Live and film, came to Chicago as part of Superstation TBS “Just for Laughs” Festival, hosting and performing in the “Let Freedom Hum” revue on June 17th.



Martin Short (as Lawrence Orbach) and friend as part of 'Just for Laughs' Chicago  
Photo credit: ©2009 Jeremy Freeman for TBS 'Just for Laughs' Chicago

Dusting off some of his famous characters, like inept talk show host Jiminy Glick, Short also introduced some of the top comedy stand-up talent in the country, including John Pinnette, Tom Papa, Greg Giraldo, Jeremy Hotz and Kathleen Madigan.

HollywoodChicago.com caught up with Short right after the taping of the special, which will air June 26th on TBS (check listings). He spoke about the Canadian sensibility of comedy, the two second cities and some memories of then and now.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** How did being born and raised in Canada inform and help develop the comedy that came out of your particular early era (the one that evolved into SCTV)?

**Martin Short:** I think in Canada we got a lot of other sensibilities, while getting the American comedy sensibility. We got ABC, NBC, CBS...but also BBC 1&2 and CBC and CTV. We got shows like Benny Hill before America and the Pythons right when they started. And that did influence people like Mike Myers, Phil Hartman, my SCTV colleagues and myself. The absurdity was more of the common strain, rather than, for example, political satire.

**HC:** What, in your experience, was the main difference between Chicago's Second City troupe and Toronto's version in your early career?

**MS:** I always thought Chicago's Second City was politically more astute and there were more characters and insanity going on at the Second City in Toronto.



Martin Short in Chicago on June 17, 2009  
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

**HC:** How did it feel to do some of your old characters in "Let Freedom Hum"?

**MS:** This was fun, there were a lot of characters I hadn't done in a long time. Lawrence Orbach, insecure stand-up comedian, is a character I haven't done in 20 years, so that was kind of cool.

It's the Day in the Life of a Stand-up, we see Lawrence at home. And then when we tried his material at a club, it was expected to bomb, but it didn't so we had to change the tone of the whole piece (laughs).

**HC:** When you did your character of talk show host Jiminy Glick, is it more fun to do that with comedians, because they are into it?

**MS:** All characters are different, some are written and structured, Jiminy Glick is a weird one for me, I just talk. I look back at the playback later and think, 'what the...', did I say that? I use expressions I've never used before, it's all very perverse.

**HC:** Peter Sellers once said that he didn't know where his characters ended and he began. You are known for getting completely immersed in your characters. Do you ever have the same feeling as Sellers had and why?

**MS:** I would never even try to put myself in the same camp as Peter Sellers.

I do think that sometimes you can hopefully get so lost in a character that your improvising within that character and staying with it through the character.

I never have problems shaking a character. I'm not that good (laughs). Peter was different at that.

**HC:** What are your favorite memories of Gilda Radner and John Candy, now that it's been awhile since they've unfortunately passed?

**MS:** Gilda and John were two very close friends of mine, and they are the same memories that you would have with any close friends. A million laughs, a million funny dinners and hysterical moments. Great times.

I can see them walking through that tent (pointing) right now. Sometimes when you so saturated with people they never leave you. That is what is great about them.

Martin Short’s “Let Freedom Hum” will air Friday, June 26th on Superstation TBS. Check listings for show time. ‘Just for Laughs’ Chicago runs through June 21st, 2009. [Click here for tickets and details.](#) [16]



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